

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims:

Claims 1-15 (canceled).

Claim 16 (currently amended): ~~The system of claim 9~~ A robotic surgical system comprising:

a manipulator movably supporting at least one surgical instrument;
a controller comprising an input device, the controller operatively
associated with the manipulator to cause selective movement of the instrument in
response to inputs from an operator at the controller; and
a clutching assembly that is movable from a first mode to a second mode,
wherein the clutch assembly in the first mode is configured to interrupt the
operative association between the controller and the manipulator so that the one of the
input device and the surgical instrument is moved from one position to another while the
other of the input device and surgical instrument is held in a substantially fixed position
and to inhibit independent repositioning of the input device in at least one rotational
degree of freedom, and the clutching assembly in the second mode is configured to
reestablish the operative association between the manipulator and the controller after the
surgical instrument or input device has been repositioned.

Claim 17 (canceled).

Claim 18 (new): A method for repositioning a master control relative to its associated slave in a robotic surgical system during a minimally invasive surgical procedure, comprising: interrupting a control loop between a master control and a slave;

locking the slave in its position at the time of the interruption; locking an orientation of the master control at the time of the interruption while floating its translational movement; translationally moving the master control to a desired position; and uninterrupting the control loop between the master control and the slave.

Claim 19 (new): The method according to claim 18, wherein the locking of the slave in its position comprises: storing the position of the slave in a memory; and maintaining the slave at that position using a slave-side control loop that is operative during the interruption of the control loop between the master control and the slave.

Claim 20 (new): The method according to claim 18, wherein the locking of the master control in its orientation comprises: storing the position of the master control in memory, and maintaining an orientation corresponding to that position of the master control using a master-side control loop that is operative during the interruption of the control loop between the master control and the slave, while allowing translational movement of the master control.

Claim 21 (new): The method according to claim 20, wherein substantially at the time of uninterrupting the control loop between the master control and the slave, a new position of the master control resulting from its translational movement during the interrupting of the control loop is associated with the locked position of the slave so that the control loop does not determine an error in the position of the master control and does not attempt to correct that error after the uninterrupting of the control loop.

Claim 22 (new): The method according to claim 18, wherein the interrupting of the control loop between the master control and the slave is initiated by a user of the master control activating an input device.

Claim 23 (new): The method according to claim 21, wherein the input device is activated by the voice of the user.

Claim 24 (new): The method according to claim 21, wherein the input device is a foot pedal activated by a foot of the user.

Claim 25 (new): The method according to claim 21, wherein the input device is a finger button activated by a finger or thumb of the user.